



STILL TO COME

Teaching Nook

A teaching nook is envisioned for the corner of our woodland path with 6–8 wide–timbered steps down to a landing. A platform and terracing could provide a private outdoor meeting area. We've solicited Merrifield Garden Center and other local nurseries for donations of large plants, for screening and to provide structure along the pathway. As always, we seek community input during this planning process regarding useful design elements.

Brushy Area on South of the Playground

The wild brush–cover in the area surrounding the PTA storage shed makes this area attractive to birds. Bog garden plants eventually could make this area an even more suitable place to live.

Raised Beds

Outside entrance #7 (by the playground) could be several raised vegetable beds, either 3' x 10' (so children would easily work both sides of the beds) or a more interesting configuration. Once plans have been designed, we'll construct the beds from composite lumber donated by TREX®.

"Growing Native" Tree Nursery

The Potomac Conservancy's "Growing Native" program is being promoted by FCPS as a way to teach students about how critical native hardwood trees are to the health of our waters. The nursery, comprised of a screened–in raised bed, is planned for the area behind the quads. Students will start trees from acorns and other tree seeds.

Growing Together Gardens Next Steps

Our plans evolve as ideas and resources percolate in our community. Let us know your thoughts about how we can "Grow Together," as we enhance our school grounds and learning environments.

WOLFTRAP ELEMENTARY'S

Growing Together Gardens

Spring 2007



THINK BIG ... START SMALL

Those were the famous first words of Audubon–at–Home's Kevin Munroe when he first came to Wolftrap to give us advice for starting a schoolyard wildlife habitat. "Have kindergarteners push some seeds into the ground with craft sticks," he advised. "That's a reasonable goal."

Well, we thought big, started small and then couldn't have predicted the pace at which things started happening. We did follow directions and scratched a few seeds into our hillside. But that was only the beginning.

We installed a Jamestown 400th Anniversary bulb garden, followed by a bluebird trail. As soon as the snow melted, a company donated a construction crew and equipment to carve out a woodland trail. Cub scouts mulched the trail and girl scouts planted about 100 native bareroot trees. Wet areas became bog gardens and bird feeders found homes in shady window wells. Vegetable gardens and butterfly gardens soon followed.

The best part of the project? As naturalist John Muir noted, "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe." The Growing Together Gardens project has been a catalyst for building new connections between Wolftrap and parents, staff, local businesses, government and non–profit agencies, media and the students.

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.

-- Rachel Carson

1907 - 1964



ENTRANCE HILLSIDE GARDEN

In the fall, 6th grade elective students planted Black-Eyed Susan, beebalm, Joe-Pye weed and purple cone flower along the hillside at the entrance to school. This spring, we've added milkweed, tickseed and other perennials.

BUTTERFLY GARDEN

Both host and nectar plants, for a variety of butterfly species, were planted last fall. We've continued to add some annuals this spring. For structure, we'll design butterfly-themed gates and student-designed stepping stones to invite kids to step into the garden for closer look at bugs and blooms.

JAMESTOWN'S 400th ANNIVERSARY

Planted as part of Jamestown's 400th anniversary celebration, these red, white and blue bulb gardens include tulips, narcissus, grape hyacinths, iris, crocus, and scilla. An oval bed is located at the corner in front of the school's A/C area; another is in front of the concrete pad.

MAIN ENTRANCE

We will coordinate the plantings at the entrance with our native plant and butterfly gardens.

TALISMAN SIDE YARD

Because this area funnels into our woodland path, we've begun planting species to



to attract birds including bleeding hearts, Jacob's Ladder and American Beautyberry.

WOODLAND ENTRANCE/PATH

This 400 foot pathway to the rear of our campus is one of the most ambitious projects to date. With labor and equipment donated by a local construction company, the path was defined and gravel spread along its length. One Sunday, in the driving rain, Wolftrap's Cub Scout Pack 1116 lined the path with landscape cloth and mulched it. Girls scouts came in a few days after and planted nearly 100 native white oak, hackberry, redbud, hazelnut, plum and persimmon seedlings in conjunction with the United Nations' Billion Trees Campaign. Meadowlark Gardens is currently reviewing our plant list, with the offer to provide signage. A variety of native shrubs have recently been added.

The woodland path includes a bog garden (opposite the gym foyer) with giant lobelia, oakeaf hydrangea, clethra, dogwoods, redbuds, spiderwort & other native plants. We hope to add two rustic bridges and another bog garden further down the path.

GYM FOYER

Foam flowers, dogwood, clethra, itea & redbuds provide a native shade garden entrance to the gym. A window-nesting box will allow birds to be observed from the gym foyer.

HUMMINGBIRD GARDEN

At the rear of the addition, a hummingbird garden will give us structure & color to attract birds and butterflies. Because the



sidewalk runs below ground level, the kids will get an "bug's eye view" of this garden area. A small vegetable garden for classroom learning could still be accommodated in front.

BIRD HOUSES

GT students are keeping an eye on our bluebird trail, and submit data to the Northern Virginia Bluebird Society. In addition, we will mount 6 additional birdhouses, painted by 6th grade elective students, around campus.

QUADS: PRETTY AS A PICTURE

A painting project is lining up for early June. Parents will prep & do the higher work, 5th grade residents will paint the lower background; a team of middle schoolers will paint on clouds. Landscaping is in the plans for 2007-08.

BASKETBALL COURTS

We're using the fencing from the basketball courts to provide some support for sunflowers, nasturtiums and pumpkins. We'd like to eventually use the hillside between the basketball courts and the steps could be a Three Sisters Garden.

EARTH BOXES

We currently own 10 of these self-watering, covered planting troughs. We will level out some terraced stations along the south-facing wall of the building addition. These boxes are perfect for most plants for school projects.